

KELLEY DRYE & WARREN LLP

A LIMITED LIABILITY PARTNERSHIP

WASHINGTON HARBOUR, SUITE 400

3050 K STREET, NW

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20007-5108

(202) 342-8400

FACSIMILE

(202) 342-8451

www.kelleydrye.com

NEW YORK, NY

LOS ANGELES, CA

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PARSIPPANY, NJ

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AFFILIATE OFFICES

MUMBAI, INDIA

DIRECT LINE: (202) 342-8518

EMAIL: tcohen@kelleydrye.com

August 1, 2013

Via ECFS

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

**Re: Fiber-to-the-Home Council Americas *Ex Parte* Filing: WC Docket No. 10-90,
Connect America Fund**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On July 23, 2103, the Fiber-to-the-Home Council Americas (the “Council”) filed a Petition for Rulemaking to Establish a Gigabit Communities Race-to-the-Top Program (the “Program”). If adopted, the Program would accelerate the deployment of gigabit connectivity in Tier II and III communities across the country and jumpstart the creation of educational, medical, social, and other applications requiring “unlimited bandwidth.”

In fashioning the Program, the Council had lengthy discussions with many communities, all of whom demonstrated an intense interest in having gigabit broadband infrastructure because they viewed it as essential for economic growth, social interaction, and civic engagement. As evidence of this interest, the Council submits the attached letters from community leaders in the following Tier II and III cities: (1) Peoria, Illinois; (2) Ann Arbor, Michigan; (3) Missoula, Montana; and (4) Bellingham, Washington. The Council urges the Commission to issue a public notice seeking comment on its Proposal and then to move forward to final consideration as expeditiously as possible.

This notice is being filed in the above-referenced proceeding according to the Commission’s *ex parte* rules.

KELLEY DRYE & WARREN LLP

Marlene H. Dortch
August 1, 2013
Page Two

Should you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,



Thomas W. Cohen
Kelley Drye & Warren LLP
3050 K Street N.W.
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20007
202-342-8518
tcohen@kelleydrye.com

*Counsel for the Fiber-to-the-Home
Council Americas*



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER



July 19, 2013

Jameson Dempsey
Kelley Drye & Warren LLP
Washington Harbour, Suite 400
3050 K Street NW
Washington, DC 20007-5108

Dear Mr. Dempsey:

Connectivity is no longer a luxury, it is a necessity. And beyond mere connectivity, competition requires an infrastructure whose speed can keep up with the pace of technology. Gone are the days when a community's competition is the neighboring community or a city in another state. The economy is truly global, and the City of Peoria must take bold steps to compete on the world's stage. Gigabit infrastructure is a core component of our future economic development strategy. In fact, greater connectivity is a core project identified in the regional, four-county Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). However, the existing costs associated with network build-out constrain our ability to attract and develop the next-generation networks that are so essential to our future.

The Fiber-to-the-Home Council's proposed Race-to-the-Top Program will help communities like Peoria invest in critical gigabit infrastructure, spurring entrepreneurship, economic growth, and civic engagement. We strongly support the FTTH Council's Race-to-the-Top proposal, and urge the FCC to adopt it. Please feel free to call me at (309) 494-8618 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Chris Setti".

Christopher Setti
Assistant City Manager

Peoria City Hall
419 Fulton Street, Suite 207, Peoria, IL 61602
Phone: (309) 494-8524 **Fax:** (309) 494-8559



CITY OF ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

301 E. Huron, P.O. Box 8647, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107
Phone (734) 794-6110 FAX (734) 994-8297

Office of the City Administrator

July 16, 2013

Heather Burnett Gold, President
Fiber-to-the-Home Council Americas
6841 Elm Street, #843
McLean, Virginia 22101

Sent via First-Class Mail

RE: Gigabit Communities Race-to-the-Top Program

Dear Heather:

Like many communities across the U.S., the City of Ann Arbor, Michigan must compete in an increasingly global environment. As a research-based, university community the infrastructure needed to support innovative ideas and companies has changed as technology has changed. Today we find the relatively expensive delivery of broadband services a constraint as well as a potentially very important *missed* opportunity to insure the private sector and our community remain competitive.

The Fiber-to-the-Home Council's recommended Race-to-the-Top Program is an example of a program that can help communities deal with the difficulty of implementing a fiber-to-the-home network, and in turn help communities invest in the infrastructure needed to keep the U.S. from losing its competitive edge in innovation. The FCC's support for this program is critical to help communities deal with the barriers to implementing a globally competitive network infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Steven D. Powers
City Administrator

SP/sh

cc: Tom Crawford, CFO



CITY COUNCIL

435 RYMAN ST. • MISSOULA, MT 59802-4297 • (406) 552-6079

July 22, 2013

Federal Communications Commission (FCC),
445 12th St. SW,
Washington D.C. 20554

RE: Gigabit Communities

Dear Commissioners,

The undersigned councilpersons of the City of Missoula write to strongly support the Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) Council's proposed Gigabit Communities Race-to-the-Top Program. Access to gigabit networks, with their unlimited bandwidth and innovative potential, is essential to economic and community development in our increasingly connected global economy. And yet, the high capital costs of these networks often serve as a barrier to deployment in mid-sized cities like ours.

The FTTH Council's proposal represents an important example of the ways in which the FCC can lower these barriers and allow cities like Missoula to unleash the ideas, businesses, and social engagement that gigabit networks provide. We encourage the FCC to support and implement this critical program.

Sincerely yours,

Mandi Mack

Adam Kelly

Ed Childers



MAYOR'S OFFICE
Kelli Linville, Mayor
City Hall, 210 Lottie Street
Bellingham, WA 98225
Telephone (360) 778-8100
Fax (360) 778-8101

July 22, 2013

Ms. Heather Burnett Gold
Fiber-to-the-Home Council Americas
6841 Elm Street, #843
McLean, Virginia 22101

Re: Gigabit Race to the Top Program

Dear Ms. Burnett Gold:

The Fiber-to-the-Home Council proposal to the Federal Communications Commission would greatly assist communities making investments in high-speed infrastructure. These investments are rapidly becoming key components of local government economic development strategy, as well as increasingly essential to successful community development and civic engagement.

The City of Bellingham enjoys support for high-speed Internet throughout our community. Our residents, businesses, the highly connected health care community, Western Washington University and other higher education institutions, the school district, labor groups, nonprofit sector, and technology community have indicated their support for high-speed infrastructure.

I consider economic development and jobs to be one of my highest priorities for the City of Bellingham. Our community is embarking on a major effort to redevelop 237 acres of our downtown waterfront. Incorporating improved technology infrastructure into our redevelopment efforts is one that holds enormous potential for our community.

The feasibility of investing in Gigabit Ethernet infrastructure in Bellingham will require investments such as those described in the proposed Race-to-the-Top program. Our community has had great interest in Gigabit Ethernet in the past, we enjoy strong local partnerships, and we have the good fortune to be located in a spectacular setting where infrastructure investment is likely to spur inspired investments and outcomes.

Keeping pace with technology requires strategic investments in critical infrastructure, yet local governments are increasingly constrained as they work to maintain other critical services. This makes funding assistance vital to local governments and the citizens they serve. We will be following the Race-to-the-top program closely and participating in the FCC feedback process. I look forward to learning more, and to consider an application to become a "Gigabit connected City" in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Kelli Linville". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a large, sweeping "L" and "V" at the end.

Mayor Kelli Linville



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Executive Director
Sommer Cronck

Heather Burnett Gold

July 22, 2013

Fiber-to-the-Home Council Americas
6841 Elm Street, #843
McLean, Virginia 22101

Re: Gigabit Race to the Top Initiative

Dear Ms. Burnett Gold,

The Technology Alliance Group (TAG) of Northwest Washington is proud to be the regional trade association representing over 600 technology businesses in our region. We were founded over 10 years ago out of the need to build out the telecommunications infrastructure for local businesses in our community. From that need, we were created with a mission to promote, educate and advocate for technology business in Whatcom, Skagit, Island and San Juan Counties.

Today, we connect technology businesses to resources through our monthly meetings, educational and networking opportunities and other business services. We also provide for the future technology workforce needs through our partnerships with our higher educational institutions. We promote economic development through our many partnerships and access to resources both locally and at the state level.

Our county has many assets that make it ideal for technology based business opportunities:

- Strong educational base with Western Washington University, Whatcom Community College, Bellingham Technical College, and Northwest Indian College
- Proximity to thriving urban technology centers (90 miles to Seattle, WA and 51 miles to Vancouver, BC)
- Active and fast growing source of early-stage capital through the Bellingham Angel Investors
- Potential for clustering new company formation and spin offs from existing companies through multiple innovation centers

We know there are many businesses in our community who would capitalize on higher speed broadband access to drive more products and jobs, and we strongly believe that the availability of a gigabit broadband infrastructure would help to attract new companies to this region. We believe our large technology business community and our longstanding successful partnerships (educational, investment, economic development) make Bellingham (and Whatcom County) an ideal location for a FTTH initiative and look forward to a chance to compete for funding under the Gigabit Race to the Top program when it is implemented.

Sincerely,

Mark Knittel, Chairman

Sommer Cronck, Executive Director